



Phase II and Phase III Archeological Database and Inventory

Site Number: 18TA237

Site Name: Poplar Island North

Prehistoric ☐

Other name(s) South Central Island

Historic ☒

Unknown ☐

Brief Description:

late 17th-19th century possible structure, artifact concentration within layers of redeposited beach sand

Site Location and Environmental Data:

Latitude 38.7711 Longitude -76.3733

Elevation 0 m Site slope

Site setting

-Site Setting restricted

-Lat/Long accurate to within 1 sq. mile, user may need to make slight adjustments in mapping to account for sites near state/county lines or streams

Maryland Archeological Research Unit No. 4

SCS soil & sediment code

Physiographic province Eastern Shore Coastal P

Terrestrial site ☒

Underwater site ☒

Ethnobotany profile available ☐ Maritime site ☐

Nearest Surface Water

Name (if any) Chesapeake Bay

Saltwater

Ocean ☐

Estuary/tidal river ☒

Tidewater/marsh ☐

Minimum distance to water is 0 m

Freshwater

Stream/river ☐

Swamp ☐

Lake or pond ☐

Spring ☐

Topography

Floodplain ☐ High terrace ☐

Hilltop/bluff ☐ Rockshelter/cave ☐

Interior flat ☐ Hillslope ☐

Upland flat ☐ Unknown ☐

Ridgetop ☐ Other ☒

Terrace ☐ Shoreline, Sub merged ☐

Low terrace ☐

Ownership

Private ☐

Federal ☐

State of MD ☒

Regional/county/city ☐

Unknown ☐

Temporal & Ethnic Contextual Data:

Paleoindian site ☐ Woodland site ☐

Archaic site ☐ MD Adena ☐

Early archaic ☐ Early woodland ☐

Middle archaic ☐ Mid. woodland ☐

Late archaic ☐ Late woodland ☐

Unknown prehistoric context ☐

Contact period site ☐ ca. 1820 - 1860 Y

ca. 1630 - 1675 ☐ ca. 1860 - 1900 Y

ca. 1675 - 1720 Y ca. 1900 - 1930 ☐

ca. 1720 - 1780 Y Post 1930 ☐

ca. 1780 - 1820 Y

Unknown historic context ☐

Unknown context ☐

Ethnic Associations (historic only)

Native American ☐ Asian American ☐

African American ☐ Unknown Y

Anglo-American ☐ Other ☐

Hispanic ☐

Y=Confirmed, P=Possible

Site Function Contextual Data:

Historic

Urban/Rural? Rural

Domestic

Homestead ☒

Farmstead ☐

Mansion ☐

Plantation ☐

Row/townhome ☐

Cellar ☐

Privy ☐

Industrial

Mining-related ☐

Quarry-related ☐

Mill ☐

Black/metalsmith ☐

Furnace/forge ☐

Other ☐

Transportation

Canal-related ☐

Road/railroad ☐

Wharf/landing ☐

Maritime-related ☐

Bridge ☐

Ford ☐

Educational

Commercial

Trading post ☐

Store ☐

Tavern/inn ☐

Military

Battlefield ☐

Fortification ☐

Encampment ☐

Townsite

Religious

Church/mtg house ☐

Ch support bldg ☐

Burial area

Cemetery ☐

Sepulchre ☐

Isolated burial ☐

Bldg or foundation

Possible Structure ☒

Post-in-ground ☐

Frame-built ☐

Masonry ☐

Other structure ☐

Slave related

Non-domestic agri

Recreational ☐

Midden/dump ☐

Artifact scatter ☒

Spring or well ☐

Unknown ☐

Other context ☐

Prehistoric

Multi-component ☐ Misc. ceremonial ☐

Village ☐ Rock art ☐

Hamlet ☐ Shell midden ☐

Base camp ☐ STU/lithic scatter ☐

Rockshelter/cave ☐ Quarry/extraction ☐

Earthen mound ☐ Fish weir ☐

Cairn ☐ Production area ☐

Burial area ☐ Unknown ☐

Other context ☐

Interpretive Sampling Data:

Prehistoric context samples

Soil samples taken ☐

Flotation samples taken ☐

Other samples taken ☐

Historic context samples

Soil samples taken N

Flotation samples taken N

Other samples taken ☐



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Diagnostic Artifact Data:

Projectile Point Types	
Clovis	<input type="text"/>
Hardaway-Dalton	<input type="text"/>
Palmer	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Kirk (stem)	<input type="text"/>
Le Croy	<input type="text"/>
Morrow Mntn	<input type="text"/>
Guilford	<input type="text"/>
Brewerton	<input type="text"/>
Otter Creek	<input type="text"/>
Koens-Crispin	<input type="text"/>
Perkiomen	<input type="text"/>
Susquehanna	<input type="text"/>
Vernon	<input type="text"/>
Piscataway	<input type="text"/>
Calvert	<input type="text"/>
Selby Bay	<input type="text"/>
Jacks Rf (notch)	<input type="text"/>
Jacks Rf (pent)	<input type="text"/>
Madison/Potomac	<input type="text"/>
Levanna	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Sherd Types

Marcey Creek	<input type="text"/>	Popes Creek	<input type="text"/>	Shepard	<input type="text"/>	Keyser	<input type="text"/>
Dames Qtr	<input type="text"/>	Coulbourn	<input type="text"/>	Townsend	<input type="text"/>	Yeocomico	<input type="text"/>
Selden Island	<input type="text"/>	Watson	<input type="text"/>	Minguanan	<input type="text"/>	Monongahela	<input type="text"/>
Accokeek	<input type="text"/>	Mockley	<input type="text"/>	Sullivan Cove	<input type="text"/>	Susquehannock	<input type="text"/>
Wolfe Neck	<input type="text"/>	Clemson Island	<input type="text"/>	Shenks Ferry	<input type="text"/>		
Vinette	<input type="text"/>	Page	<input type="text"/>	Moyaone	<input type="text"/>		
				Potomac Cr	<input type="text"/>		

Historic Sherd Types

Earthenware	Ironstone	<input type="text"/> 40	Staffordshire	<input type="text"/>	Stoneware	
Astbury	Jackfield	<input type="text"/>	Tin Glazed	<input type="text"/> 3	English Brown	<input type="text"/> 6
Borderware	Mn Mottled	<input type="text"/>	Whiteware	<input type="text"/> 132	Eng Dry-bodie	<input type="text"/>
Buckley	North Devon	<input type="text"/> 4	Porcelain	<input type="text"/> 8	Nottingham	<input type="text"/>
Creamware	Pearlware	<input type="text"/> 10			Rhenish	<input type="text"/>
					Wt Salt-glazed	<input type="text"/> 2

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Other Artifact & Feature Types:

Prehistoric Artifacts	
Flaked stone	<input type="text"/> 11
Ground stone	<input type="text"/>
Stone bowls	<input type="text"/>
Fire-cracked rock	<input type="text"/>
Other lithics (all)	<input type="text"/>
Ceramics (all)	<input type="text"/>
Rimsherds	<input type="text"/>
Other fired clay	<input type="text"/>
Human remain(s)	<input type="text"/>
Modified faunal	<input type="text"/>
Unmod faunal	<input type="text"/>
Oyster shell	<input type="text"/>
Floral material	<input type="text"/>
Uncommon Obj.	<input type="text"/>
Other	<input type="text"/>

Prehistoric Features

Mound(s)	<input type="text"/>	Storage/trash pit	<input type="text"/>
Midden	<input type="text"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="text"/>
Shell midden	<input type="text"/>	Ossuary	<input type="text"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="text"/>	Unknown	<input type="text"/>
House pattern(s)	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>
Palisade(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Hearth(s)	<input type="text"/>		
Lithic reduc area	<input type="text"/>		

Lithic Material

Fer quartzite	<input type="text"/>	Sil sandstone	<input type="text"/>
Jasper	<input type="text"/>	Chalcedony	<input type="text"/>
Chert	<input type="text"/>	Ironstone	<input type="text"/>
Rhyolite	<input type="text"/>	Argilite	<input type="text"/>
Quartz	<input type="text"/>	Steatite	<input type="text"/>
Quartzite	<input type="text"/>	Sandstone	<input type="text"/>
European flint	<input type="text"/>	Basalt	<input type="text"/>
Unknown	<input type="text"/>	Other	<input type="text"/>

☐ Dated features present at site

Historic Artifacts	
Pottery (all)	<input type="text"/> 366
Glass (all)	<input type="text"/> 816
Architectural	<input type="text"/> 214
Furniture	<input type="text"/>
Arms	<input type="text"/> 3
Clothing	<input type="text"/>
Personal items	<input type="text"/>
Tobacco related	<input type="text"/> 37
Activity item(s)	<input type="text"/> 16
Human remain(s)	<input type="text"/>
Faunal material	<input type="text"/>
Misc. kitchen	<input type="text"/> 65
Floral material	<input type="text"/>
Misc.	<input type="text"/> 25
Other	<input type="text"/>

Historic Features

Privy/outhouse	<input type="text"/>	Depression/mound	<input type="text"/>	Unknown	<input type="text"/>
Const feature	<input type="text"/>	Well/cistern	<input type="text"/>	Burial(s)	<input type="text"/>
Foundation	<input type="text"/>	Trash pit/dump	<input type="text"/>	Railroad bed	<input type="text"/>
Cellar hole/cellar	<input type="text"/>	Sheet midden	<input type="text"/>	Earthworks	<input type="text"/>
Hearth/chimney	<input type="text"/>	Planting feature	<input type="text"/>	Mill raceway	<input type="text"/>
Postholes/molds	<input type="text"/>	Road/walkway	<input type="text"/>	Wheel pit	<input type="text"/>
Paling ditch/fence	<input type="text"/>				

All quantities exact or estimated minimal counts

Radiocarbon Data:

Sample 1:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 2:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 3:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability
Sample 4:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 5:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 6:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability
Sample 7:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 8:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability	Sample 9:	<input type="text"/> +/- <input type="text"/> years BP	Reliability

☐ Additional radiocarbon results available



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External Samples/Data:

Collection curated at MAC Lab/JPPM

☐ Additional raw data may be available online

Summary Description:

Poplar Island North (18TA237) consists of a late 17th -19th century possible structure, and an artifact concentration within layers of redeposited beach sand. The Chesapeake Bay lies on the west side of the island and Poplar Harbor lies on the east side of the island. The site is located on the north end of one of the islands in the Poplar Island group: naturally formed islands situated in the mid-shore region of the Chesapeake Bay. Historically, the Poplar Island group comprised two islands: Poplar and Jefferson. During the 19th century, Coaches Island split off from the south end of Poplar Island. Over the last 60 years, Poplar Island has suffered shoreline erosion, which resulted in the large-scale reduction of the original 1,000-acre island into a string of 4 small, marshy islands. The island on which the site is situated is a nearly level, marshy hummock that is subjected to flooding by tidal and wave action. A large portion of the site is underwater due to rapid shoreline erosion.

Reconnaissance of the island was conducted in 1987. This included a surface search and controlled underwater inspection of the shoreline. The survey indicated that there were 6 general areas of artifact concentrations on the island. The west side of the island seemed to have the greatest quantity of 17th and 18th century artifacts (concentrations 2-4 and 6), designated site 18TA236. Concentration 2 consisted of bottle bases and ceramics. Concentration 3 consisted of slipware and possible Buckley ware. (A "Concentration 6" was later added between these two, with no further description.) Concentration 4 consisted of the remains of a wooden structure, a snuff bottle, and a pipe stem. These three concentrations were recorded as offshore, within a curving diver lane which hugged the western side of the island. No artifacts were found in a diver lane placed farther out in the water. The east side of the island appeared to yield mostly 19th century artifacts (concentration 5) and prehistoric artifacts, and was designated site 18TA218. The northwest part of the island had the remains of what appeared to be a brick floor eroding into the bay (concentration 1) and a number of 17th -19th century artifacts. Concentration 1 was designated as site 18TA237. Although the site form indicates that artifacts were collected during the 1987 reconnaissance, they were not listed.

Phase I and Phase II archeological investigations were conducted at the site in 1994. The investigations were undertaken as part of a survey of the islands ahead of proposed plans to reclaim Poplar Island and restore its shoreline by constructing a series of dikes to facilitate backfilling the island area. Plans involved restoring Poplar Island to its AD 1847 shoreline that would leave Coaches Island unaffected (Alternative Alignment #1). Alternative alignments were proposed (Alternatives #2 and #3) that included the south and west shorelines of Coaches Island within the dike system. The Phase I investigations were designed to: identify potentially submerged cultural resources of the submerged portion of the 1847 Poplar Island footprint and of the access channel, and of the shallow areas near Coaches Island, identify sites and site boundaries on the remaining terrestrial areas. The terrestrial portion of the study examined the 4 remaining islets of Poplar Island and the immediate shoreline of Coaches Island within proposed Alternative Alignments #2 and #3.

Archival research was conducted as part of the 1994 Phase I and II investigations. The focus was on establishing a chain-of-title and land use history for Poplar Island focused on the area of 18TA237. Deeds from the 17th and 18th centuries demonstrate that Poplar Island at that time was a locus of early settlement. The Carroll family came into ownership of the property in the late 1700s and maintained it until its sale in the 1850s. The Carrolls apparently leased the land to tenant farmers rather than lived there themselves. By the early 19th century, Poplar Island was separated from Coaches Island by a narrow neck of land called Coaches Neck. Available cartographic evidence suggested that the shoreline of the island began to change in 1846/47. In 1857, Charles Carroll sold that portion of Poplar Island that contains the site area. Thomas Sherwood purchased the 250-acre tract and the land came to be known as Sherwood Farm. The 1860 census revealed that the Sherwood household was comprised mainly of elderly individuals. Therefore, it was a possibility that the members of two adjacent African-American families provided the necessary labor to run Sherwood Farm. The 1880 census showed that Benjamin Sherwood, his family, and a laborer and a servant lived at the property. By then, the farm's acreage had declined to 238 acres. After 1904, settlement shifted away from the immediate shoreline, perhaps in response to the rising level of the bay and the increase in marshland along the shore.

During the Phase I survey, 3 features were located along the shoreline that likely related to 18TA237. Features 1, 2, and 3 were a series of adjacent brick features along the eastern and northern shores. Feature 1 was a concentration of brick rubble and artifacts located in the tidal zone on the northeast shore; Feature 2 was comprised of submerged bricks eroding from the shoreline at the north end of the island; Feature 3 was a small brick concentration embedded in the peat on the northwest corner of the island. It was thought that Feature 3 may retain integrity under the peat overburden.

The Phase I investigation indicated that the site potentially had significant research potential. That determination combined with the fact that it was quickly eroding into the bay, prompted a Phase II evaluation of the site. The objectives were to define the boundaries and the integrity of the site, to establish its temporal and functional associations, to evaluate the potential eligibility of the site for listing on the National Register, and to make management recommendations for the site. Phase II investigations included shovel testing at 4.57 m (15ft) intervals, the excavation of two 1.524 m² terrestrial test units (TUs 1 and 2), and one 1.524 m² submerged test unit (TU 3). Auger tests supplemented the shovel tests to identify deep deposits and replaced shovel tests in wetland portions of the site. Dredge tests were utilized during testing of the tidal and near-shore areas. All excavated soils were screened through 1/4" mesh hardware cloth.

Results of the Phase II investigations revealed that Feature 1, which was tested through the excavation of TU 3, 8 dredge tests, and 6 shovel tests, represented redeposited brick fragments and artifacts. There was no evidence for intact deposits or original soils. The artifacts associated with the feature ranged in date from the 17th century to the present, although most overlap the 19th century. The material may have been redeposited from a feature formerly intact at the location, or it may represent redeposition from the area of Feature 2. Feature 2 testing included the excavation of 7 near-shore dredge tests, 12 shovel tests and TU 1. Two trenches were also excavated to expose the feature profile but the soil was not screened and no artifacts were collected from the trenches. The brick concentration that defined Feature 2 measured 9.45 m by 10.67 m, and may have represented the remains of a brick wall or floor. However, the feature did not retain structural integrity and its original function could not be identified. Artifacts associated with the feature ranged in date from the 17th century to the present. Feature 3 was first identified as a small brick concentration embedded in the peat. Testing of the feature included the excavation of 6 shovel tests and TU 2. The brick deposit measured 16.46 m by 4.88 m. It was determined that feature had no integrity and was comprised of unarticulated brick rubble, most of which was fragmentary and worn.

Because of the cohesive nature of the assemblages, the artifact counts from the Phase I study were combined with those from the Phase II investigations. A total of 1,402 historic artifacts were recovered. All artifact totals were taken from the Appendix V Artifact Inventory except for the ceramics which were provided in a table in the original text. There were 16 activity items (1 ceramic doll part, 1 fishing line guide, 3 pieces of light bulb glass, and 11 fragments of lamp glass). There were 214 architectural items including 61 brick fragments (1 sample of yellow brick was discarded), 141 window glass shards, 5 cut nails, 3 unidentified nails, 1 miscellaneous hardware, and 3 bolt pieces. There were 1,107 kitchen related items including 350 modern machine made glass



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Unknown ☐

fragments, 163 non-machine made and indeterminate bottle glass fragments, 12 pharmaceutical bottles, a 3-piece mold glass fragment, 126 fragments of blown-in-mold glass, 24 table glass fragments, 366 ceramic sherds (1 North Devon Gravel tempered, 3 North Devon Sgraffito, 5 creamware, 2 white salt-glazed stoneware, 3 Early porcelain, 3 tin-enamelled earthenware, 6 British Brown stoneware, 2 unidentified imported brown stoneware, 1 Westerwald stoneware, 17 pearlware, 5 hard paste late porcelain, 31 redware, 40 ironstone, 3 combed slipware, 5 plain slipware, 4 Rockingham/ Bennington, 5 yellow ware, 56 domestic gray stoneware, 1 Albany slip stoneware, 16 domestic brown stoneware, 22 industrial stoneware, 132 whiteware, 3 unidentified sherds), 1 milk glass lid liner, 1 glass crown cap, 1 salt and pepper shaker cap, 10 animal bones, 2 clam shells, and 50 oyster shell fragments. There were 25 miscellaneous items including 12 fragments of melted glass, 1 rivet, 1 knob end, 2 rubber fragments, 1 piece of Styrofoam, 1 rubber glove, 5 pieces of coal, and 2 unidentified metal objects. There were 37 tobacco related items including 6 white clay pipe bowl fragments, 27 white clay pipe stem fragments, and 4 stoneware reed-stem pipe bowl fragments. There were 3 arms-related items (2 English gray gunflints and 1 shotgun shell). The machine-made glass fragments, brick, coal, oyster, the shotgun shell, and 2 piece of the light bulb glass were discarded after they were cataloged in the lab.

In addition to the historic artifacts, a total of 11 prehistoric items were retrieved from the site. This included 10 pieces of debitage and 1 chert side-notched projectile point base fragment. These materials were mixed with the historic artifacts and no coherent site was indicated. However, they may derive from 18TA218, which is a prehistoric site adjacent just south of 18TA237 on the east side of the island.

Poplar Island North (18TA237) consists of a possible brick structure and an artifact concentration within layers of redeposited beach sand. Based on the assemblage, it was possible to assign a temporal affiliation to the site from the late 17th to the early 19th centuries. The mean date for the ceramics from the site is AD 1833. The primary site deposit may have been a stratified sheet midden that has been eroded and redeposited. However, the site has lost the degree of integrity that is required for sites eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. No further archeological investigation was warranted or recommended for the site.

External Reference Codes (Library ID Numbers):

00005255, Site Files